2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIBE

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Dewar: O Ange, the gruel is made of broken rice.
Ange: O my Dewar, where are you going today?
Dewar: Today I am not going anywhere
For I have to load my bullocks.
Tomorrow I go to another land to trade.
Ange: I too will go with you to drive the laden bullocks.
Dewar: Don't come with me, for all know how we stand to one another.
Those who do not know us will call us brother and sister.
And when they call us that we shall be ashamed.

602
522
[831]

The relations between *samdhi* and *samdhin* are generally of an amiable, coarse and humorous nature. For men this is a drinking rather than a joking relationship, and all their lives whenever they meet they regard it as an excuse for a bottle. The women, specially as they get older, are more obscene in their conversation. They catch hold of each other's breasts, stick feathers into the private parts and exchange the coarsest jokes.

The place where this joking and fun most commonly occurs is at a marriage. 'There is no purdah in a house of marriage.' Everybody feels free to fool about; no one is going to be offended; everyone is slightly drunk.

V. Summary

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582

The clan and the family dominate and control Muria social life. Nothing reveals more clearly the extent of this domination than the fact that out of 2000 marriages examined no fewer than 1799 were of the cross-cousin type and, in spite of every temptation to the contrary, 1884 out of 2000 boys married according to their parents' wishes. This could only happen in a society which had a strong regard for its own organization and laws.

The clan system retains its vitality both as an exogamous unit and as a means of organizing its members round the clan-god and the memory of the Departed. Clan festivals remain great and notable occasions. The clan system, as a study of marriage statistics will show, continues to regulate betrothal and marriage. The *samdhi* relationship, as may be seen in every song and story, continues to be of the first importance. Clan traditions still regulate funerary rites and memorial customs. Totemism is less important, but is still far from moribund. The whole complex of ideas and customs is greatly confused, but the very confusion is perhaps a sign of its vitality.